



JOHN A. GRAVES

Bio

He is the founder, president and chief executive officer of PR Networks, Inc., a full-service public relations firm with more than 30 years' experience, the oldest Michigan-based African American firm. Graves' business resume as a public relations consultant and senior advisor has included several corporate clients.

He was one of the lead outside government affairs consultants for Olympia Development on the \$863 million Little Caesars Arena project, home of the Detroit Red Wings and Detroit Pistons. The Arena awarded 56% of its construction contracts to Detroit-based businesses.

His special event experience spans to Coca-Cola's 100th Anniversary, Major League Baseball 2005 All-Star FanFest, Summer and Winter Olympic Torch Runs and many others. He also co-managed the Sean "P Diddy" Combs Vote or Die Campaign at Wayne State University with Mary J. Blige and Leonardo DiCaprio before 6,000 students.

As the chairman of Citizenship Education Fund, Graves convenes the Global Automotive Summit annually. The Rainbow PUSH Automotive Project, an initiative of Citizenship Education Fund (CEF), is an annual conference designed to address minority issues in the auto industry. The Rainbow PUSH Global Automotive Summit now in its 23rd year, has attracted numerous automotive captains who have conducted "fireside chats" with Rev. Jesse Jackson, founder and president, Rainbow PUSH Coalition. CEF hosts similar themed events in Atlanta, New York, Oakland, and Washington DC, which have been supported by participating several corporate leaders.

Graves' social commitment includes chairman of the Detroit Youth Sports Commission, which manages two baseball fields in Detroit. In 2019, before COVID-19, youths played more than 600 games annually in various leagues.

Graves co-chaired the 40th Anniversary of "Roots" the TV mini-series at the Museum of African American History with Ambassador George Haley, the Haley family, actor John Amos, who played the role of Kunta Kinte and other dignitaries in attendance. The event's honorees included a social activist from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who aided war orphans and Sanofi-Aventis, a \$40 billion France-based pharmaceutical company, which offered a drug for smallpox without exercising a patent.



One of Graves' most cherished accomplishments was serving as Community Chair of Detroit Public Schools' Clean, Safe and Healthy Schools Program, which garnered national recognition from President Bill Clinton. Led by civil rights activists John Lewis and Hosea Williams, Graves, a 10th grade student, marched on "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Alabama on March 7, 1965. He marched subsequent days led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., until they reached the state capital of Montgomery, where Dr. King gave a powerful speech. Graves would return in 2015, to co-manage the 50th Anniversary of this seminal moment representing the city of Selma.

He served honorably in the US Army as a missile supply specialist, and later as a distinguished Honor Guard. He has humbly accepted numerous awards. H, Graves has served as chairperson of the official Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr national holiday celebration in Detroit for several years.

Graves received his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Detroit-Mercy.

When you stop shining the light on humanity, what's the point!